UNITED
NATIONS

A

General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/51/589
31 October 1996
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: ARABIC

Fifty-first session
Agenda item 82

EFFECTS OF ATOMIC RADIATION

Report of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee)

Rapporteur: Mr. El Walid DOUDECH (Tunisia)

I. INTRODUCTION

1. At its 3rd plenary meeting, on 20 September 1996, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the General Committee, decided to include in the agenda of its fifty-first session the item entitled "Effects of atomic radiation" and to allocate it to the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee).

2. The Fourth Committee considered the item at its 6th and 7th meetings, on 16 and 22 October 1996 (see A/C.4/51/SR.6 and 7).

3. For its consideration of the item, the Committee had before it the report of the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation. 1/

II. CONSIDERATION OF DRAFT RESOLUTION A/C.4/51/L.3

4. At the 6th meeting, on 16 October, the representative of Germany introduced the report on the item 1/ and, on behalf of Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Egypt, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Honduras, India, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Malaysia, the Netherlands, Nicaragua, Pakistan, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Thailand, Ukraine

---

1/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-first Session, Supplement No. 46 (A/51/46).

and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, introduced a draft resolution entitled "Effects of atomic radiation" (A/C.4/51/L.3).

5. At the 7th meeting, on 22 October, in response to a request of some Committee members at the informal consultations on the draft resolution, the Secretary of the Committee read out a short brief on the mandate and budgetary provisions of the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation (see A/C.4/51/SR.7).

6. At the same meeting, the Chairman drew attention to revised draft resolution A/C.4/51/L.3/Rev.1 and informed the Committee that Japan, Mongolia, New Zealand, the Philippines and the Russian Federation had become sponsors of the revised draft resolution. The revised draft resolution contained the following changes:

(a) A new fifth preambular paragraph was added, to read:

"Noting the views expressed by Member States with regard to the work of the Scientific Committee at the fifty-first session of the General Assembly";

(b) The words "and calls upon the Scientific Committee to ensure the widest possible dissemination of this scientific annex to Member States" were added at the end of operative paragraph 2.

7. Also at the same meeting, the Committee adopted revised draft resolution A/C.4/51/L.3/Rev.1 without a vote (see para. 8).

III. RECOMMENDATION OF THE SPECIAL POLITICAL AND DECOLONIZATION COMMITTEE (FOURTH COMMITTEE)

8. The Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 913 (X) of 3 December 1955, by which it established the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation, and its subsequent resolutions on the subject, including resolution 50/26 of 6 December 1995, in which, inter alia, it requested the Scientific Committee to continue its work,

Taking note with appreciation of the report of the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation, 2/

Reaffirming the desirability of the Scientific Committee continuing its work,

---

2/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-first Session, Supplement No. 46 (A/51/46).

Concerned about the potentially harmful effects on present and future generations resulting from the levels of radiation to which mankind and the environment are exposed,

Noting the views expressed by Member States at its fifty-first session with regard to the work of the Scientific Committee,

Conscious of the continuing need to examine and compile information about atomic and ionizing radiation and to analyse its effects on mankind and the environment,

1. Commends the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation for the valuable contribution it has been making in the course of the past forty-one years, since its inception, to wider knowledge and understanding of the levels, effects and risks of atomic radiation and for fulfilling its original mandate with scientific authority and independence of judgement;

2. Notes with satisfaction the completion in 1996 of a further scientific annex by the Scientific Committee informing the scientific and world community of its latest evaluations of the sources and effects of ionizing radiation on man and his environment, and calls upon the Scientific Committee to ensure the widest possible dissemination of this scientific annex to Member States;

3. Requests the Scientific Committee to continue its work, including its important activities to increase knowledge of the levels, effects and risks of ionizing radiation from all sources;

4. Endorses the intentions and plans of the Scientific Committee for its future activities of scientific review and assessment on behalf of the General Assembly;

5. Requests the Scientific Committee to continue at its next session the review of the important problems in the field of radiation and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its fifty-second session;

6. Requests the United Nations Environment Programme to continue providing support for the effective conduct of the work of the Scientific Committee and for the dissemination of its findings to the General Assembly, the scientific community and the public;

7. Expresses its appreciation for the assistance rendered to the Scientific Committee by Member States, the specialized agencies, the International Atomic Energy Agency and non-governmental organizations, and invites them to increase their cooperation in this field;

8. Invites Member States, the organizations of the United Nations system and non-governmental organizations concerned to provide further relevant data about doses, effects and risks from various sources of radiation, which would greatly help in the preparation of future reports of the Scientific Committee to the General Assembly.